

Newsletter

PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE SOCIO-ECONOMIC TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

More than 10 years ago, the local government in Indjija developed a model, established procedures for communication, made an offer to citizens and businesses to ask a question in one place, in a very easy and fast way, to point out the irregularities on the work of public utility companies, institutions and administration, and to receive an answer to their considerations about the future of their community.

IMPROVING THE WORK OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION "SISTEM 48"

Mile Bodrozić, Director of the Agency for IT, GIS and Communications of the Municipality of Indjija

Local administration follows the work procedures within the legal solutions that are often defined in a rigid manner. Those procedures are changing very slowly, and technological development simply requires the improvement of those procedures as well. We particularly have to emphasize the need for a "fast" and easy communication between the local leaders and citizens (businesses). The existing procedures for this type of communication are multiannual and they are not binding. They are intensified in certain times (before the elections and in case of natural disasters), and then stop again.

If local government includes local administration, public utility companies and institutions, it is clear that communication is carried out on voluntary basis, and support to citizens through administrative and court proceedings. The speed of these processes is discouraging for both citizens and businesses.

More than 10 years ago, the local government in Indjija developed a model, established procedures for communication, made an offer to citizens and businesses to ask a question in one place, in a very easy and fast way, to point out the irregularities on the work of public utility companies, institutions and administration, and to receive an answer to their considerations about the future of their community. It often happens that problems identified this way are solved in 48 hours, but more importantly, citizens always receive an answer regarding the problems, and if it is possible to solve it, they are also informed about the time when it will be solved. When this period is over,

the administration again provides information about the situation of the problem, and so on until the problem is solved.

The citizens report their problems by providing their identification, but they can also report a problem anonymously. They do not have to know who is in charge of the solution for their reported problem. They report the problem in one place, and the system has a software identification of those in charge of the solution. This way, the problem will be solved in the service in charge. Only the system administrator has the information about who reported the problem. Those who solve problems receive work order without knowing who reported the problem. This ensures an equal treatment in problem solution.

Citizens and businesses have a possibility to report their problems in several ways, and to receive responds to their problems in the most acceptable way for them. They can report the problem directly at the desk in the municipality, by phone available 24 hours, sms, e-mail, on the internet, on the internet with GIS support or android application. When reporting a problem they also choose how they want to receive the response, which can be sent in any of these ways. Also, with the protection of citizens' rights, the problem and answers are published on the portal www.indjija.net and they are public. This ensures that all reported problems are forwarded to the relevant institution for solutions, and the portal also works as a controlling and informative mechanism. If you report a problem, and it is not published on the portal, you send the problem directly to the mayor

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who can, and who must ensure that the omissions do not happen and send the problem to relevant service for solutions.

The procedure of reporting problems and providing answers generates databases which enable the analysis of those data in different time intervals and with different criteria. A regular analysis of reported problems, the quality of responses, as well as the execution of provided responses is carried out on regular meetings of the "Sistem 48", organized every Friday and attended by the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, Chairman of the Assembly, directors of public utility companies and institutions, heads of inspection services, finance, local tax administration, as well as the media. The software uses a simple way to prepare the responsible persons for a "control and management" function. The obligatory nature of these meetings, public work and control of responses, as well as adoption of obligatory conclusions for public utility companies, institutions and inspection services, all proved to ensure the quality of their work. We have to especially emphasize that the meetings of "Sistem 48" also include a large number of photos which show different situations before and after the performed works. Also, all requirements are recorded on the spot and as such they are presented in the GIS system. Where there are no such meetings, the system falls apart very quickly and it does not perform the planned function.

Meetings of the "Sistem 48" last around 45 minutes, and they include the analysis of received reports and the responses sent in the previous period. The constituent part of the meetings is the issue of how soon were the responses sent, i.e. whether the deadline of 48 hours was respected. Problem analysis very often defines a permanent problem which requires a strategic solution, and not only partial repairs that are generally more expensive for the budget. In the previous period, these analyses have lead to the solution of a significant number of permanent problems, which provided a long-term solution, and the analyses showed that this lead to significant savings for the municipal budget.

It is very important that at the meetings, reports are submitted not only from the software of the "Sistem 48", but also the reports from public companies, institutions and administration, and through

many years of work the models for regular reporting were developed. These reports show both actual activities and financial reports. Financial reports clearly indicate costs for each activity, as well as the amount of funds required from the budget for those activities. Work and expenditure trends are shown at the same time. An important report is also the amount of funds invoiced to other service users, so called "owned funds", and claims thereof. This way the municipality has a permanent knowledge about the flow of funds within the public company or institution, as well as collectability of those claims. It also has a clear view of the costs paid from the budget.

Citizens and businesses benefit from the operation of the "Sistem 48", who can report each problem in an easy and fast way, and always receive a response about the method and deadlines for the solution, after which the problem is solved. Very few requests from citizens cannot be solved or there are requests opposite to the opinions of technical services. Indirectly, citizens with their reports and monitoring of the problem solution process, transparency in work and management and control functions of the system influence the budget expenditures.

Public companies and institutions also have benefits, and they use the system for identification of all problems from different utilities they cover, which are afterwards solved through work orders. This also introduced a control of works and of expenditures. Annual analyses of the problems are especially underlined, which very accurately identify problems from different sectors and therefore are used to make annual plans for strategic solutions for the problems. The municipality also has benefits, which primarily uses the "Sistem48" for easy communication with their citizens. Managers are not required to meet clients and those meetings are few. The local administration is more significant, and the process also controls the work of municipal services and public companies and institutions.

The analyses also show that around 90% of reports to the municipality are actually questions for public companies and institutions. That is why the municipality and its management were rightfully criticized for many problems, which they could not influence. "Sistem 48" provides complete information and the public work ensures those problems are solved in a fast and efficient manner. ■



PROJECT “Medicinal herbs - healthy profit”

Author: Ljiljana Nikolić, Head of the Local Economic Development Department, City of Loznica

How it started

At the territory of the City of Loznica, for several years there is a citizens' association “Flora-Podrinje” for collection and growing of medicinal herbs, but in 2014 the association was re-registered in accordance with the existing regulations. The association “Flora-Podrinje” showed the initiative to make a partnership with the City of Loznica and the Fund for City Development and improve their capacity and more intensively work on collecting and growing medicinal herbs. At the same time, the National Employment Service (NES) – branch office in Loznica, in partnership with the Croatian Employment Service, is starting to elaborate the idea of organizing education of unemployed people in the field of cultivation and collection of medicinal herbs. Since the initiative was supported by several large city institutions (NES, City of Loznica, Fund for City Development), as well as the Association “Flora”, they started with joint activities which can contribute in the future to organized growing and collecting of medicinal herbs, which can also be a profitable business for unemployed people who live in rural parts of the City of Loznica.



What is our joint goal:

Organised collection and growing of herbs in cooperation with companies – buyers, as an business venture for unemployed people and registered agricultural properties in the territory of the City of Loznica which generate profits.

Who are our target groups:

Unemployed people from the City of Loznica, registered agricultural properties in the territory of the city, youth, people with disabilities and special needs, employed people, etc.

The following project activities have been implemented:

- Capacity building for the citizens' association “Flora” by increasing the number of the association members.

Between November and March, through the LED Department and the Youth Centre, the City of Loznica carried out a survey of people interested to be involved in organized collection and growing of medicinal herbs, that was implemented as a partnership through the Development Fund and NES – branch office Loznica. After the survey, one hundred people applied to become members of the citizens' association “Flora – Podrinje”. Databases were developed of the members of the association “Flora – Podrinje” and all possible stakeholders for cooperation with the association (buyers, scientific institutions, citizens' associations in the region, etc.).

- Capacity building for the citizens' association “Flora” by carrying out education in the field of growing and collecting medicinal herbs.

In March and June, the City of Loznica, Fund for City Development and NES, in cooperation with the Association “Flora Podrinje” organized meetings with the Institute “Josif Pančić”, Pharmaceutical Faculty from Belgrade, Institute for Nature Conservation and company “Herba”, who showed their interest to participate in educational programs of “Flora”, both in theoretical field as well as practical work. The organized educational programs were attended by a large number of members of “Flora – Podrinje”. All activities on the implementation of the project “Medicinal herbs – healthy profit” are supported by the mayor and the city management. The mayor spoke to the participants of the first educational program who filled the room with 105 seats, and a great interest was also shown by the fact that many people were standing throughout the program, wanting to obtain knowledge. The team of the Institute “Josif Pančić” was lead by Slavoljub Tasic, the company Herba by its owner Zoran Nikolic, and the Institute for Nature Conservation Berislava Ilić. A two-day education was organized in June by the project partners. Apart from the theoretical lectures, practical education was also carried out in the field, lead by professor Radisa Jancic, PhD and Danilo Stojanovic, PhD, from the Botanic

Department of the Pharmaceutical Faculty in Belgrade, as well as Verica Stojanović, M.A. from the Institute for Nature Conservation. This educational program also had many participants.

Members of the association "Flora-Podrinje" had an opportunity to spend time in nature and learn about medicinal herbs, key points for determination, sustainable collection methods, in order to preserve the population of medicinal herbs in the nature.

Experts from the Institute for Nature Conservation also recommend herb growing on plantations in order to preserve the population of medicinal herbs in the nature and generate bigger revenues.



Plan for the following period

Medicinal herbs are planted on the farms of the members of the association "Flora" in order to see the results of these business ventures. There are also plans for possible cooperation and partnership with the representatives of the private sector in agricultural sector, who are experienced in business operations, financial management, trade activities, marketing and organisation. We believe that this project will generate first revenues for the members of the association "Flora-Podrinje" in 2016, and that it will be a clear indicator that it is profitable to grow medicinal herbs.

Expected results:

- Organising the collection and growing of medicinal herbs for a known buyer which generates revenues for the association member, builds capacities and the number of members of the association "Flora-Podrinje", employs a certain number of people who are now unemployed.
- Networking with the named partners which results in the implementation of new projects related to organized production and collection of medicinal herbs.
- Creating conditions for registration of the company for buying and packing medicinal herbs in the territory of the city of Loznica.

How do we plan to finance the work program and projects of the association "Flora –Podrinje":

For the implementation of initial activities in 2015 for capacity building in the field of medicinal herbs, all the logistics in terms of human and material resources was provided by the citizens' association of Loznica and the Fund for City Development, as well as NES Loznica and the founders of the citizens' association "Flora – Podrinje".

There are available funds where citizens' associations can apply for donations. It is important to emphasize that the association "Flora-Podrinje" have not had experiences in the implementation of donor projects, but as a partner of another citizens' association "Iskra" and the Cultural Centre "Vuk Karadžić" from Loznica, they have already participated in the preparation of a project – "Take care of nature and it can take care of us", with which the citizens' association "Iskra" applied to the call of the Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental protection, that was closed on June 15, 2015. If the project is approved, flora of Jadar will be presented in the protected cultural heritage in Trsic and available for a large number of visitors – 100,000 a year, and also many workshops for school children will be organized, to take care of the nature and its gifts in the future.

As a conclusion:

According to the implemented activities of the project, we can conclude that the expected results are realistic, and that, even though the institutions of the City of Loznica, Fund for City Development and NES – branch office Loznica will provide maximum support to the citizens' association "Flora-Podrinje", the result will mostly depend on their proactive approach, capacity, organization and field work, as well as farm that decide to grow herbs. It is also important to emphasize the quality and contents of the Contract with buyers, reliability of the association "Flora-Podrinje" towards partner companies which emerge as buyers in the field. There is an old saying "Chances to succeed are equal to chances to fail". In order to create success, we have to approach the overall concept of growing and collecting medicinal herbs seriously, in an organized and professional way, primarily by the association "Flora-Podrinje", as well as other partners. ■

OUTDOOR In - Zubin Potok Tourism Development



The project “Outdoor In - Zubin Potok Tourism Development” officially ended on 28 February 2015, after two years. The project was financed from the third call of the EURED Programme, which is funded by the European Union through the EU Office in Kosovo, and jointly implemented by Zubin Potok municipality and the Institute for Territorial Economic Development - InTER.

Numerous results were achieved by the project which are promoted on our Facebook profile and on the website: www.ibarski-kolasin.org. We managed to draw public attention to the natural beauty of Ibarski Kolasin, to initiate thinking that tourism can be a development branch of economy and to motivate a large number of people to be involved in tourism development. We have achieved success in developing some basic tourist products such as the beach on the Gazovide Lake, cycling and hiking trails and additional tourism signage, outdoor gym and an indoor climbing wall.

During the last two years numerous sports and tourism events have been organised, some of which are hiking events and adventure race: Gazivode - Mokra Gora. In addition, we organized two International Summer Camps where young people from across the Balkans participated.

Great results was also achieved in in marketing: we made a promo film “Get Ready for the adventure! (<https://vimeo.com/106795032>) which has been seen on our Vimeo channel by more than 8,700 people. The film was also broadcasted on TV station “MIR” (www.facebook.com/RtvMir) from Leposavic, which covers municipalities of Leposavic, Zvecan and Mitrovica, and through cable broadcasters it is seen in other parts of Kosovo as well. In addition to the film, during the project we have been active in designing brochures, posters, banners, t-shirts and other promotional material, which makes the project recognized by our target groups. Recently we have participated at the International Tourism Fair in Belgrade, which is the fourth fair event in which we participated in the previous two years. Our promotion success can also be measured by the fact that we have more than 3,000 followers on Facebook profile, which also presents great potential for the future.

As an important result of the project, we developed a Zubin Potok Tourism Development Strategy and a tourist monograph with mystic stories and legends. ■

Model for a Smart Municipal Services Reporting System for the citizens: System sustainability possibilities

InTER

was contracted by NALED for the

analysis aimed at identification way to ensure financial sustainability of the Smart Municipal Services Reporting System for the citizens. This regional project is implemented by NALED in cooperation with GIZ, SDC and a group of partners from Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro.

The analysis is conducted between March and June 2015. ■



Closure of the project Sustainable Cross-Border Development of Foca and Pluzine Municipalities

The project “Sustainable Cross-Border Development of Foca and Pluzine Municipalities”, funded within the scheme of EU IPA CBC BiH-MNE Programme has finished.

Project implementation started on March 1, 2013 and it lasted for 24 months. Within the project, InTER provided support to the Municipalities of Pluzine and Foca in project management and supervision of the intervention results. ■

VIA FERRATA

Get ready for the adventure!



A new project - continuation of tourism development in Ibarski Kolasin

InTER started the implementation of a new project "Climbing on the Berim Rocks - Dare to Imagine", which is a continuation of the initiative to develop tourism in Ibarski Kolasin.

The project is financially supported by the Embassy of Finland and the PPSE Program of the Swiss Government. The project is implemented by InTER, in cooperation with Zubin Potok municipality, the newly formed NGO Outdoor In and the Lifesaving Club "Wolf" from Foca (BiH).

The project objective is to develop and promote new products for active tourism in Zubin Potok municipality, which will contribute to the positioning of this area as an attractive tourism destination.

Key project activities are:

- Construction of Via Ferrata on Berim;
- Preparing of Berim Rocks for climbing in at least 10 directions;
- Purchase of necessary climbing equipment;
- Construction of the logistic camp;
- Training of 20 guides for Via Ferrata;
- Promotion of new tourism products

The project duration is 10 months, from 1 March to 31 December 2015. ■



Implementation of the new paradigm for sustainable development of the flooded areas in teh search for a final solution for the status of the hydrosystem "Ibar-Lepenac"



Due to the importance of the issue of the Gazivode Lake, i.e. the hydrosystem "Ibar-Lepenac", Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER) prepared the document with the proposed solution for this sensitive issue, that was submitted to the negotiating sides within the Brussels Agreement. As a part of the solution, InTER proposed the implementation of the World Bank's new paradigm for sustainable development of territories that were affected by the construction of the hydrosystem, which includes sharing the benefits generated by using resources among different governance levels.

This publication was published in Serbian, English and Albanian language and it can be downloaded from InTER's website www.lokalnirazvoj.org

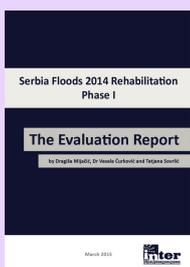
Strategy of Intergated Rural Development of Foca and Pluzine municipalities



Within the project "Sustainable Cross-Border Development of Foca and Pluzine Municipalities", funded within the scheme of EU IPA CBC BiH-MNE Programme, InTER provided support to Pluzine and Foca municipalities through the development of the Strategy for Integrated Rural Development of Foca and Pluzine municipalities.

The publication was published in Serbian language.

Evaluation report: Serbia Floods 2014 Rehabilitation Phase I



InTER was hired by Caritas Srbija for the evaluation of the project Serbia Floods 2014 Rehabilitation - Phase I EA 22/2014. The report contains findings, conclusions and recommendations that are results of the project evaluation. The project is focused on improvement of the living conditions of households affected by floods by providing support through construction material, household reconstruction, hygienic items and winterisation.

The report was published in English language.

Tourist Monograph: Ibarski Kolasin



Within the project "Outdoor In - Zubin Potok Tourism Development", Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER) prepared a tourist monograph which is the crown of the two-year work within the project. The monograph describes natural environment, geographical features, settlements, cultural and religious location in Ibarski Kolasin in the best possible way. The book also includes six short stories describing traditional way of life in Ibarski Kolasin.

The publication was published in Serbian and English language.

Job opportunity at InTER - Researcher

Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER) announces a job opportunity for a researcher, for a period of six months within the program "Think Tank Young Professional Development Program for MA and PhD graduates". The program is intended for the people who graduated in the last three years from PhD or master studies in social sciences, from the universities in OECD countries.

CONDITIONS

- PhD or master's diploma in social sciences (political science, economy, public policy and policy analysis, law, sociology, etc.) from a university in OECD countries in the last three years;
- Age 23 to 35 in the moment of application;
- Resident of one of the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo*, Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia or Ukraine;
- Good knowledge of the fields: public policy evaluation, regional development, regional policy, multi-level governance, decentralisation, economic development;
- Experience in the work with qualitative methods: interviews, focus groups;
- Excellent writing skills (preferably with experience in writing public policy proposals);
- Native language: Serbian/Montenegrin/Croatian/Bosnian;
- Excellent knowledge of English language (ability to use literature in English and write analytical articles requiring minimum editing);
- Computer literacy.

Vacancy announcement [here](#).

More about the OSF TTF Junior Professional Development program can be found [here](#).